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THE
Commonweal

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George H. Tavard

Invisible (White) Man

Wilfrid Sheed

The Bobby Baker Case

William V. Shannon

Conservative Comeback in Britain?

J. M. Cameron

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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

Back to Geneva

THE conciliatory atmosphere marking the resumption of the seventeen-nation disarmament conference at Geneva presents a contrast to the troubled state of the world. Bloody outbreaks in East Africa and the Congo vie for the headlines with the repercussions of France's untimely recognition of Communist China. Meanwhile the British are appealing for American troops to help maintain order on embattled Cyprus. It is also touch and go whether Indonesia will come to desist from its armed raids on the fledgling confederation of Malaysia.

Perhaps it might be possible to dissociate Soviet willingness to negotiate on arms controls from the Communist-prepared native uprisings in Zanzibar, Tanganyika, Kenya, Uganda and the Congo. Admittedly conditions in these newly-formed countries are unstable to begin with. Also the training of their native Communists doubtless does go back for several years. To what extent they are acting on current orders from Moscow is undetermined, but the vehemence with which Mr. Khrushchev warned the British not to send troops to Zanzibar would signify more in the way of the Russians' involvement than simply their taking advantage of an opportunity for anti-colonial propaganda.

In view of such emotion-arousing happenings as these, it would seem that recent signs of more cordial Soviet-American relations tend to fade into the background. Even the new collaboration on space exploration, centering just now on bouncing signals off the Echo 2 balloon, is back-page news. The same is true of successive shipments to Russia of American surplus wheat, although there have been expressions of fear in the American press that extension of long-term credits to the USSR could enable Khrushchev to provide his people with both guns and butter.

Yet signs of lesser tension persist and are reflected at Geneva in the intimation that the Soviet Union would be willing to agree to the retention of some nuclear weapon delivery systems before the final stage of complete disarmament has been reached. Uppermost in the objectives of the American delegation are two agreements. The first would militate against surprise attack by stationing observers in each other's lands; the second would curb the spread of thermonuclear weapons to other powers.

On the first, Mr. Tsarapkin, the chief Soviet delegate, declared that it would have to be connected with a reduction of American armed forces in Germany and the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in that country. The Russians are opposed to the spread of thermonuclear weapons but they maintain that this cannot be prevented as long as France continues to develop its own striking force. Actually General de Gaulle would have no such weapons to spare, but he did refuse to sign the test-ban treaty or take part in the Geneva conference. Still it will be some years before French capacity will be in range of that of Russia or the United States.

DOUBTLESS the debate at Geneva revolves around NATO plans to establish an Atlantic fleet equipped with Polaris missiles with thermonuclear warheads. Whereas America and Britain see this as a means of preventing Germany from having its own independent thermonuclear force, the Soviets view it as a way of providing the feared Germans with this very weapon. The fact that the emergence of such a defense force is believed to be only a year away should impart to the present conference a sense of urgency lacking in its previous deliberations.

Another approach is to focus on the control of delivery systems, as suggested by President Johnson. Because of the magnitude of the facilities for manufacture and installation required, this would entail infrequent and unextensive inspections to size up the situation on both sides. If agreement could be reached on "freezing" present missiles and other

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delivery-vehicles, the Geneva conference would produce something truly substantive.

At present there are few indications that this is in store. Mr. Tsarapkin himself is a comparatively minor figure. It is Soviet practice to leave the concluding of any major agreements to their top men. Can anything of importance, then, be in prospect at Geneva? There are such persistent elements as a common interest in national survival, common opposition to the spread of nuclear weapons, similar pressures to lighten national burdens of armaments, a like desire for the esteem of the peace-loving peoples of the world.

One objective well worth seeking is the maintenance of the less tense and more cordial relationship between NATO and the Soviets. Another is to reach enough new agreements on comparatively minor or peripheral points to keep up the momentum produced by the test-ban treaty, limited as such momentum is. Under these conditions it might be possible progressively to find more and more issues about which both sides have a like concern.

Church and State in Spain

EVER SINCE the end of the Spanish civil war in 1939, the relationship of Church and State in Spain has stood as a symbol of many things to many people. For those fearful of Catholic power, the ties between altar and regime there have been a symbol of pure Catholic theory translated into living reality. For those defensive about such an implication, Spain has been presented as the exception proving the rule that Catholics are staunch defenders of religious liberty and the separation of Church and State.

Over the years, the latter viewpoint has gradually gained a hesitant assent. Spain is an anomaly in the Western world, and no less an anomaly for the Church. If not always in vigorous terms, the papacy has on occasion suggested to the Spanish Church and the Franco regime that a liberalization would be in order. These suggestions have done some good. Supported by the thought of *Mater et Magistra, Pacem in Terris* and the Second Vatican Council, a number of Spanish bishops and priests have gradually urged the regime to reform itself. The most outspoken complaint of late came from the Abbot of the Benedictine monastery of Montserrat. He flatly denied that the government had any right to call itself Christian. And during the second session of the Council, a large group of Basque priests blamed Spanish anti-clericalism on the close ties between Church and State.

All of these things bespeak progress, but progress so slow and halting that Spain still remains a scandal to the Catholic world. Spain, the Basque priests bluntly charge, has a totalitarian political system, a totalitarian labor system, a censored press and a callous indifference toward human and Christian rights. These things should not be ignored or forgotten.

Nor should it be forgotten that the Church is as much to blame for the situation as the Franco government. By the concordat of 1953, the Vatican confirmed a 1941 agreement giving the government the right to approve the appointment of bishops. In return, the Church got a place of privilege: it sold part of its freedom to the state for the sake of temporal benefits. Naturally, the issue was not put in such crass terms; much was made of the traditional religion of the Spanish people, etc.

The only possible way in which the Church can atone for its error, its culpable complicity in Spanish absolutism, is by a repudiation of its privileged position. Yet this is something the Spanish hierarchy is not likely to do unless the Council, the Pope and the rest of the Catholic world make it perfectly clear that there is no room in the Church for an alliance between religion and dictatorships. The Church now suffers in Spain, even if some Spanish clergymen fail to see this. Those who do see it deserve the full support of all Catholics.

Birth Control and Welfare

THE New York State Board of Social Welfare has just issued a policy statement on birth control and public relief programs. In it, the Board authorizes state payments for the cost of birth control advice given to married relief recipients for medical reasons. The recipient must initiate the request for aid, then welfare workers refer the applicant to private physicians who will be paid by the state.

It is a truism that on such a sensitive question, there are no solutions, only accommodations. This particular accommodation derives from the precedent-setting compromise in the New York City hospital system five years ago—which allowed the fitting of contraceptive devices for any woman on a medical indication that pregnancy would endanger health—and from the growing practice around the country to incorporate birth control advice into relief programs.

Catholics, of course, are reluctant to see tax funds used to pay for instruction in a practice that they consider immoral. Yet the other side of the coin is that many non-Catholics are kept by circumstances —either ignorance or lack of finances—from practices they do not necessarily regard as immoral. By

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allowing relief recipients access to birth control information, on a basis that will be completely voluntary, the new policy broadens the personal freedom of individual recipients without committing the state to the active promotion of contraception. It is, in short, another half-way house, not completely satisfactory to many on both sides.

It should be noted, too, that the advice will be given only on a certification of medical necessity, not as a family planning measure. By forbidding welfare workers from initiating referrals of clients to doctors for birth control advice, the program acts to meet fears that the state will pressure relief recipients into birth control practices. In all, the new policy is a moderate one, and can be expected to have some impact on other welfare programs around the country. The important thing is that it represents an accommodation—the sort that emerges when Catholic and non-Catholic views of government "neutrality" prove incompatible.

WASHINGTON REPORT

The Bobby Baker Case

THE Bobby Baker case has become the first major political embarrassment of the Johnson Administration. It has also become a major ordeal for "the Establishment," the bipartisan clique that dominates the inner life of the Senate.

Baker, who was President Johnson's protégé and top assistant during his years as Senate majority leader, is now under investigation by the Senate Rules Committee for possible misuse of his political influence for personal gain. He resigned last fall as secretary to the Senate majority when he was named as one of the defendants in a private suit involving two automatic vending machine companies. Recent testimony by an investigator for the Rules Committee discloses that Baker, only thirty-five when he resigned, had increased his financial net worth from $11,000 in 1954 to more than $2,000,000 last year. He came to Washington as a boy of 14 from the little town of Pickens, South Carolina, to be a congressional page. He attended law school nights and engaged in a law practice on the side, but until his resignation, he had spent his entire adult life on the Capitol payroll. He early came to the attention of Lyndon Johnson who appointed him majority secretary in 1955, a post that used to pay $19,000 a year, plus a limousine. When the Senate Democrats recently chose Baker's successor, they appointed him at the same salary but eliminated the limousine "as if it had been the car instead of the company that had been the bad influence," as one newspaperwoman commented.

The job of majority secretary in pre-Baker days had been a sinecure of no substantive importance. (Parenthetically, we may note that the members of the Senate and House, who frequently exhort others to strict economy, have loaded up the payroll of both houses with doorkeepers, clerks, and other functionaries whose duties are—shall we say—not burdensome.) Baker transformed the office. He had from his earliest days at the Capitol been an "eager beaver." Ex-page boys now recall, for example, that he first ingratiated himself with senators by seeing to it that there were taxicabs waiting to take them home on rainy nights. As majority secretary, Baker made himself useful and ubiquitous. He very soon became a familiar figure on the Senate floor, particularly just before roll-call votes. One of the distinctive features of Mr. Johnson's leadership of the Senate was his abhorrence of public defeats. Since he never brought up a measure for a vote unless he were certain what the outcome would be, roll-call votes in his time received as much careful preparation as a Broadway opening night. Here Baker supplemented his chief in the frequent polling and repolling of the members by telephone before a vote. He knew everyone's unlisted number, who was likely to be in the Senate steam bath or off having a drink, and who was with the opposition on a bill but willing, if needed, to give a "live pair." (On a live pair, a member who is present cancels out his vote by pairing it with the vote of an absent member who takes the opposing view.) When a roll-call was nearing its end, reporters looking down from the press gallery would make little jokes about "How soon will Bobby show up with Senator So-and-So?" Sure enough, Bobby would soon appear through the Senate door walking at a fast clip and wigwagging the arrival of some reluctant or hitherto absent member. (It is a fact of senatorial life that in a body of one hundred, there are on any specific vote two or three members who do not really care what the outcome is and who can be coaxed or pressured. It is not, of course, the same two or three on every vote.) Baker's style and dress were what might be termed conservatively flashy. He went in for black suits, white-on-white shirts and white ties. He could be charming and deferential to a party of senatorial wives touring the empty Senate chamber or he could be brusque and aggressive to persons he considered hostile or of no importance.

Baker's career as a man of influence in the United States Senate began with small things. He was a man

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who would be helpful to a senator who wanted a larger office suite, or who had three direct outside telephone lines and wanted a fourth, or who wanted to have the majority leader pose for pictures with a group of constituents. From these minutiae, he moved on to helping senators get on the committee of their preference, get their private bills out of committee, or get an amendment added to a pending measure. He came to know almost every senator's foibles and weaknesses, and where their interest were real and where they were only formal.

In describing Baker's career up to this point, one has to stop and point out that these services and this kind of intimate knowledge are routine in politics and in most legislative bodies. There are at least a score of men on Capitol Hill now who are similarly well-informed and well-connected, and who devote themselves exclusively to serving the public ends of their senator or their party. But it must also be said that this kind of knowledge and intimacy are immensely valuable to lobbyists and get-rich-quick speculators. A man so situated can make money out of his political expertise.

IF BAKER, as now seems apparent, made use of his knowledge to improve his own bank account, he certainly was not lacking in adept tutors inside the Senate itself. He was especially close to the late Senator Rober Kerr of Oklahoma. Kerr was a walking demonstration in conflicts of interest. The owner of large natural gas reserves, he repeatedly sponsored a bill, which both Truman and Eisenhower vetoed, to abolish federal regulation of gas prices. The owner of many oil wells, he used his seat on the Finance Committee to defend the tax depletion allowance for oil. The owner of uranium mines, he was the biggest single supplier of uranium to the Atomic Energy Commission. As a senator, he voted on the size of the Atomic Energy Commission's budget. Kerr was a powerful member of the Senate establishment. As chairman of the Public Works Committee, he held almost life-and-death power over the authorization of the public works projects any individual senator desired. He used this power in trades for support on bills that interested him. In his private capacity as the major stockholder in an Oklahoma bank, Kerr made several loans to Baker's private business ventures.

Kerr, to his credit, was at least not a hypocrite. He openly boasted about using his Senate power to advance his private interests.

"Hell," he used to say, "if everyone abstained on grounds of personal interest, I doubt if you could get a quorum in the U.S. Senate on any subject."

Another intimate of Baker is Senator George Smathers of Florida, one of the assistant Democratic floor leaders. Smathers, while a member of the Commerce Committee that has jurisdiction over railroads and airlines, has been a member of a Miami law firm that represents Pan American Airways, Seaboard Railroad Airline Company, and several other transportation firms. Smathers and Baker were partners in a highly profitable land transaction involving real estate near the Cape Canaveral (now Cape Kennedy) missile launching site.

President Johnson, when in the Senate, was close to Kerr and Smathers, and Baker was their handyman. Because of their close association, Mr. Johnson's name has already been drawn into peripheral aspects of the Baker case. It is not likely that he paid much attention to Baker's tangled business activities, but it is still a political nuisance to be linked to them. And there are many others in Washington who have substantial reasons for hoping that the Senate will wind up its investigation of Bobby Baker in a rapid and circumspect manner. WILLIAM V. SHANNON

(*Mr. Shannon is The Commonweal's regular correspondent in Washington. He is the author of the recently published book,* The American Irish [*Macmillan*].)

FROM BRITAIN

Conservative Comeback?

NO ONE in the middle of the year now dying could possibly have predicted that the Conservative Government would enter 1964 in reasonably good heart and with a sporting chance of victory at the general election in March or June. The Government and the Party were grievously wounded many times and each time it seemed that the wound could be fatal.

Shortly after the Radcliffe Report on the Vassal case, from which the Government emerged looking slightly silly but not seriously damaged, the Profumo scandal broke. This was treated by many commentators as more than the kind of individual lapse inevitable in any large human enterprise, as being rather a symptom —not perhaps isolated, for we were then in daily expectation of new revelations—of an unhealthy climate in public life and one linked with the affluence of the upper reaches of the society nurtured by years of Conservative rule. Macmillan's phrase, that the British had "never had it so good," was remembered and remembered against him, not only by the Opposition, but also by the more moralistic circles of the Establishment represented by *The Times*.

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But Profumo was only one of the many misfortunes or punishments visited upon the Government. There was the failure to enter the Common Market, an enterprise to which the Government seemed to have fastened its credit. It was commonly believed that, once in the Common Market, a general election would follow with the Common Market as the chief issue. There was, too, a general feeling that relations with the United States were, under a surface glaze of cordiality, going badly. Here the issues were those of the British independent deterrent—what was the point of an *independent* deterrent, to fight the last of the colonial wars—and of the British contribution to the conventional armed strength of Europe.

The Government, too, was made responsible for the policy of the Beeching Report on the railways. Beeching had recommended large cuts in the network of railways that connects every part of this island with every part and this, as we contemplated an inadequate road system choked with trucks and private cars, seemed to make very little sense. Our productivity was below that of the rest of Europe. Our best scholars were being drained away to the United States (the then Lord Hailsham, now plain Mr. Hogg, explained that this was a simple consequence of the deficiencies of American education).

Finally, there was the curious reluctance of Mr. Macmillan to *go*. It seemed, to the horror of many Conservatives, that the man who had failed to lead Britain into the Common Market and had failed to know about Mr. Profumo what had been known in every club and newspaper office in London, was actually proposing to lead the Conservative Party—it was assumed, to defeat—at the next Election.

Then followed in October the farcical proceedings of the Conservative Party conference at Blackpool. It will be remembered that illness had finally compelled Mr. Macmillan's resignation. His obvious successor was Mr. Butler. But Mr. Butler was widely disliked for a variety of reasons and, like Dr. Fell, for no reason. He was slightly pinker than the rank-and-file liked. He was against flogging and (it was suspected) capital punishment. He shared with Mr. Macleod the disadvantage of being clearly very intelligent and he gave the impression of enjoying his own cleverness and of laughing behind his hand at the gaucheries of some of his colleagues. Most serious of all, it was rumored that Mr. Macmillan himself didn't want him.

Who, then, was to head the Government and lead the Party to victory, or defeat? The ineffable Lord Hailsham had no doubts. He publicly renounced his peerage before an excited meeting at Blackpool and was plainly making a bid for the leadership. Then there was Mr. Reginald Maulding, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was favored by those who wanted to give Conservatism a new look and who, while admiring Mr. Butler, judged—and how right they were—that in the last analysis he lacked resolution.

It looked for a little as though what had never before happened in Conservative history would happen this time, that is, that the Party conference would actually decide who was to lead the Party. Then it became known that Mr. Macmillan thought that for the sake of the Party and the country it would be well to look for a leader in more dignified circles. Here was the Earl of Home, the Foreign Secretary. Everyone thought Alec (the habit now is to treat politicians like dance-band leaders and popular athletes and call them by their, if possible abbreviated, first names) a nice fellow, not too bright but not too dim, an aristocrat, but the rank-and-file would like that, above all, a man without enemies. The extraordinary thing is that Mr. Butler took it all without public complaint and in the end turned up in the Home Government as Foreign Secretary. His close associates and admirers, two of the most intelligent men in the Macmillan Government, Mr. Macleod and Mr. Enoch Powell, found Home and the maneuver by which he became Prime Minister more than they could stomach and stayed out of the new Government. Those who had suspected Mr. Butler's resolution were right.

All this took place in full view of the nation; and one would have thought that these ludicrous proceedings would have completed what Profumo had threatened, the ruin of the Conservative Party. But this is, at the end of 1963, clearly not the case. As James Margach wrote in the *Sunday Times* on December 29, "the Conservative and Labor Parties are back precisely where they stood at the beginning of 1963—no better and no worse, and 1963 need never have happened." And although it is still probable that Labor will win the next election, this is by no means certain.

HOW is one to explain all this? I don't think anyone can give a full explanation. In part the answer may be that in our kind of society the issues of politics have become trivialized, so that very little seems to depend upon which of the two parties comes to power.

The Labor Party under Mr. Wilson's leadership, and this became clear at the Annual Conference, is primarily concerned to show itself as the party able to do well what the Conservatives do badly. It seems likely that a Labor Government would by cautious stages get rid of the independent deterrent, though even this is not absolutely clear, and this would be an immense gain, though it seems unlikely that any British Government would dare in the present climate of opinion to follow this with an increased conventional contribution to European defense. Both parties are committed to the vast expenditure on education of all kinds, and especially university education, recommended by recent official reports. One guesses that in this the Labor Party

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would be more resolute. But one still has the feeling that not enough hangs upon the decision of the electorate, not nearly so much as appears (at least, to one who judges from a distance) to hang upon an American Presidential election.

It is, of course, quite wrong to suppose that there are not serious issues, quite apart from those of foreign policy, in British politics. If they are not brought out by the Labor Party in its campaigns, this is because they do not appear to be profitable in electoral terms.

For example, there are in many large towns the districts increasingly populated by colored immigrants from the Commonwealth. In these districts the housing conditions are bad and there are frictions between the white and colored populations that occasionally explode into minor race riots. The Conservative response to this was the Commonwealth Immigrants Act, an Act designed to control immigration from Commonwealth countries and in certain circumstances to enable immigrants to be deported. The Labor Party conducted a strong campaign against this legislation and pledged itself to the repeal of the Act. Now the Party is beginning to hedge on the issue. Why? Just because it appears to be electorally disadvantageous to stand up for the cause of the colored immigrants.

In fact, pusillanimity in this issue cannot, at this date, be of the smallest electoral advantage. Local Conservative parties have less scruple than the men at headquarters and do not hesitate to exacerbate racial feeling for electoral purposes. In this sort of contest the Labor Party, no matter how timid it may be, cannot hope to win. All it succeeds in doing when it soft-pedals the racial issue is to discourage the keenest of its own supporters and give to the country as a whole the impression of a party that is unprepared to live up to its principles when the going is hard.

One wonders if such a party can win an election and if it deserves to do so. I do not doubt that on balance a victory of the Labor Party would be a good thing; but perhaps not enough of a good thing; and perhaps not so manifestly a good thing that, even after a long period of Conservative bungling, the electorate when it goes to the polls will give to Mr. Wilson and his colleagues the victory they expect. J. M. CAMERON

(J. M. Cameron is The Commonweal's correspondent for Great Britain.)

Will Sparks

Justice and the Canal

Does the rioting prove that there is cause for an appeal to the collective American conscience?

HOW FAR back in time must a generation hold itself responsible for the political transgressions of its ancestors? The position of the government of Panama appears to be: not so far as November 3, 1903, but far enough to include November 18 of that year. The earlier date is the one on which the commander of the Colombian garrison seized control of Panama City and declared the existence of an independent "Republic of Panama." Fifteen days later, after the U.S.S. Nashville had prevented a loyal Colombian force from crossing the isthmus to put down the revolt, the United States guaranteed the independence of the new republic, receiving the perpetual "use, occupation, and control" of a zone ten miles wide in which it proposed to construct a canal.

The Republic of Panama now wishes to abrogate this treaty and negotiate a new agreement, setting a definite time for U.S. withdrawal and the re-establishment of Panamanian sovereignty over the Canal Zone (if one can speak of the "re-establishment" of what has never, in fact, heretofore existed). Is there cause here for an appeal to the collective American conscience? Are we the beneficiaries of an unconscionable act of Rough Rider imperialism? And if so, to whom should we now make amends—the descendants of our co-conspirators of 1903, or the legitimate government of Colombia against whom our grandfathers jointly conspired?

The Republic of Panama, just two weeks older than the Canal Zone, owes its existence as a nation to the political machinations of the same United States whose engineers carved the waterway. Were the disputed agreement a civil contract instead of a treaty, the courts would deny Panama a hearing on the well-established principle that "those who sue for equity

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must enter court with clean hands." It is as though a claimjumper were to protest that his fellow conspirator, being stronger, had seized a disproportionate share of the stolen gold mine.

The United States has, in fact, already made its amends to the only injured party of 1903. A treaty with Colombia in which the United States expressed "sincere regret" and promised to pay an indemnity of $25,000,000 was signed in 1914. The U.S. Senate, however, refused to ratify the treaty so long as it contained anything in the nature of an apology. Colombia finally settled for the money alone, which was paid in installments between 1922 and 1926. Whether or not this was adequate reparation for Colombia, it seems clear that the U.S. owes nothing, in law, equity, or conscience to the Republic of Panama for the events of 1903.

What of the years since 1903? Has our role in the isthmus been one of colonial exploitation? Should we have given Panama a larger share of canal revenues? Even in the absence of contractual or historical obligation, should we not have done more anyway, out of due regard for distributive justice?

The official reply of the Panama Canal Company to this question has usually been that the canal is not profitable. In 1961, for example, there was a deficit of $6,000,000 which had to be made up from reserves accrued in profitable years. This is not a convincing answer, however, for two reasons: first, because company officials make a deliberate accounting effort to avoid showing a profit in order to negate such criticism; and, second, because canal tolls are kept at an unrealistically low level by shipping interests with great influence in the U.S. Congress.

It is safe to assume that the Panama Canal could be made to show an appreciably larger profit. We could then share this profit with—whom? The 1,200,000 citizens of Panama? This is certainly what the young student demonstrators want us to do. Unfortunately, there is nothing in Panama's short history to suggest how this might be accomplished.

PANAMA is a country where more than fifty percent of the arable land belongs to less than two percent of the population. It is a country where—literally—fenceposts grow into trees again, yet its agriculture remains undeveloped. Roads are easier to build in the climate and topography of Panama than most other regions of Latin America, yet the roads have not been built. Panama is the shipping crossroad of a hemisphere and the major refueling station for aircraft flying between the U.S. and the west coast of South America, yet its tourist industry is negligible. Panama City, with the exception of certain conspicuous enclaves for the rich, is one vast sprawling urban slum which, on its outskirts, blends imperceptibly with the equally miserable rural slums of the surrounding countryside.

If these conditions are to be charged to the United States, perhaps we should plead guilty to having failed to intervene sufficiently in Panama's internal affairs. Canal operations now account for $60,000,000 annually of Panama's income—approximately $50 for every man, woman and child in the country. Per capita earnings in Panama are $300 a year, as compared to $4,228 for the Canal Zone. It requires a singular naïveté to believe that Panamanian earnings would rise to the same level were the Canal to be turned over, not to "the Panamanians," but to the government of Panama.

Panama, like many other small Caribbean states, is less a nation than a hacienda. During its brief history, a few families have alternately cooperated to preserve their collective status, and quarrelled among themselves for a reapportionment of the spoils. Their interest in the welfare of those they purport to represent is discernible only in election years, of which this is one, and is then generally confined to rhetoric directed against the United States. When, for instance Aquilino Boyd, Panama's chief delegate to the United Nations, pauses at Kennedy Airport to inform the world that he is "ashamed of American democracy," one cannot help wondering whether this sense of outrage will lead to Boyd Brothers, Inc. severing its lucrative connection as the Panama agents of the American Express Company.

There is in Panama a remarkable priest who, having dedicated himself to a ministry to the poor, has done much to provide at least a semblance of those social services which most Western nations outside Latin America now take for granted as a governmental function. (I will confer on him an anonymity he did not request but which, under the circumstances, he would probably appreciate.) Summing up his experience of several years, he informed me not long ago that, "at no time have we ever received any help from the wealthy Panamanians. The school-lunch program, our training classes for the unemployed, our little attempts to improve the hovels these people live in: all have been paid for by small contributions from people to whom charity is a luxury, by a few shopkeepers—and American soldiers in the Canal Zone." Perhaps it should be added that the priest is himself a Panamanian, not a gringo.

Note especially that he said *soldiers* from the Canal Zone. This leads to still another aspect of the complicated Canal Zone situation. Living in the 520-square-mile zone are more than 36,000 Americans, including 21,500 members of the military and their dependents and 14,600 civilians who work for the military, the canal company or the zonal government, and their dependents. They are by no means a homogeneous group. Military personnel—chiefly Army—are looked upon with noticeable condescension by the three or four thousand employees of the Panama Canal Company

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and their dependents. The latter are frequently viewed by the military as the source of much unnecessary trouble—a verdict which was confirmed, if confirmation were needed, by the flag-raising incident at Balboa High School. The American military are not noted for their ability to blend into foreign communities during overseas assignments, but such an incident is unthinkable to a military commander.

The chief difference between military personnel stationed in the Canal Zone and the civilians who operate the canal is that the military are moved to new assignments at the end of a two- or three-year tour of duty, while the Panama Canal Company employees and their families are now moving into a second generation as permanent residents. May 4, meaningless to most Americans, is for Zonians an important occasion known as Acquisition Day: it marks the beginning of what has become for them a way of life. This alone should be enough to suggest that an unhealthy situation exists and needs correction. Senator Wayne Morse has already suggested that Canal Company employees be rotated on the same basis as the military. There is some question whether this is technically feasible. How long, for instance, does it take to train a Canal pilot? On the other hand, is there any reason to believe that Panamanians cannot learn to be equally reliable pilots? If sufficient technical personnel could be obtained from the isthmus itself, we could dissolve the Panama Canal Company, maintain a small military garrison for defense of the locks and make everybody happy.

Unfortunately, there are few signs that we will be able to do this in the immediate future. Lenin is purported to have said that one engineer is worth fifty Communists; the University of Panama, like so many others in Latin America, continues, however, to produce an insufficiency of engineers, surveyors, and other technicians, together with a surplus of lawyers and doctors of economics—not a few of whom espouse Communist causes out of frustration over their lack of job opportunities.

The real tragedy of Panama is to be seen in precisely those Panamanian students whose unsuccessful efforts to raise their own flag in front of the American High School in the Canal Zone precipitated the recent riots. In an underdeveloped country with a population slightly larger than Baltimore's, most of it illiterate, the college or university graduate has no place to go. Unless he belongs to one of the few ruling families, whose consuming interest in the profits of commerce has caused them to ignore for sixty years every other aspect of their country's potential, he must either exile himself or live out his life in menial occupations which make a mockery of his youthful promise. Without our intervention in 1903, this same young man might today be a bright boy from an obscure province of Colombia setting out for Bogota to seek his fortune in the capital city of a major Latin American country. This, it seems to me, is the great harm we have done to the residents of the Isthmus of Panama—the only crime of which we have not been accused.

GEORGE H. TAVARD

Paul Tillich's System

When "Protestant principle" encounters "Catholic substance"

PAUL TILLICH has made the first American attempt to build a theological "system" which explains all of Christianity, at least by implication. The final volume of that effort (*Systematic Theology*, Vol. III, University of Chicago Press, $6.95) has just been published.

That American Protestantism has been able to nurture such a growth is an unmistakable sign of maturity, even though, in this case, the plant was German. When Paul Tillich came to the United States in 1933, he brought with him the leading ideas of his "system," but it is in the atmosphere of American Protestantism that he developed them and has brought them to fruition in a major work. By its scope, this may be compared with the "system" of Schleiermacher in nineteenth-century Germany or of Calvin in sixteenth-century France. More remotely, because it disclaims trying to be a "summa," one may compare it with the "system" of St. Thomas Aquinas.

The principle of Tillich's system is so simple and all-embracing at the same time that the late Gustave Weigel, who was the first Catholic to discern its importance, viewed it as the epitome of all Protestantism. It may be briefly formulated in Tillich's own words: "In

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relation to God, God alone can act and no human claim, especially no religious claim, no intellectual or moral or devotional 'work,' can reunite us with him." The underlying intention is to provoke a dialectical encounter of this "Protestant principle" and what Tillich calls the "Catholic substance," namely, "the concrete embodiment of the Spiritual Presence" in sacraments, dogmas and churches.

It is hardly surprising that once the first enthusiasm aroused by the scope of his system was spent, Tillich's synthesis has met with growing criticism. In fact, the only major studies of it that have been published are sharply critical. Among Protestants, Kenneth Hamilton has subjected the method of Tillich's theology to an exhaustive and devastating examination (*The System and the Gospel*, 1963) and J. Heywood Thomas (*Paul Tillich: an Appraisal*, 1963), surveying his doctrine in general, has concluded that its proper function today is to arouse constructive critique. Among Jews, Bernard Martin (*The Existentialist Theology of Paul Tillich*, 1963) has studied his anthropology with discerning understanding. Among Catholics, I have myself shown the basic incompatibility of Tillich's system with the traditional understanding of the Christian faith (*Paul Tillich and the Christian Message*, 1962), an unavoidable conclusion when the tradition of faith of the early ecumenical Councils is considered to be normative. Naïveté would believe Tillich's system and method to be totally adequate, and bigotry would object to the patristic Church being taken as a stable point of reference. In neither case would Tillich be honored.

Esthetically, one may appreciate Tillich's decision, in his final volume, not to answer his critics. The general lines of his system and the logic of his positions appear much more clearly than if he had devoted space to polemics or modified his thought in keeping with his critics' strictures. Yet, esthetic considerations should not dominate theological debate. And for the sake of the ultimate validity of Tillich's system, one may regret that he took practically no account of his critics. Granted that most of the third volume must have been written before their own works appeared, footnotes or appendices would have been sufficient for a friendly dialogue. Instead, Tillich seems to march on in utter disregard of those who have cared enough about his system to commit themselves to a critique of its shortcomings. This may commend the final volume to uncritical readers. But who wants uncritical readers?

If the logic of Tillich's positions is unalloyed by compromise with any other approach to his attempted synthesis than his own, the weaknesses of the first two volumes are now compounded by the very logic of Tillich's fundamental line of argumentation. The general topic of this volume is "Life and the Spirit," which is prolonged by a shorter part on "History and the Kingdom of God." The previous volumes had studied "Reason and Revelation," "Being and God" (Vol. I) and "Existence and the Christ" (Vol. II). As Revelation answers and resolves the ambiguities of Reason, the notion of God resolves the ambiguities of Being, that of the Christ the ambiguities of Existence, that of the Spirit the ambiguities of Life, that of the Kingdom of God the ambiguities of History. Tillich's method of correlation is applied: the ambiguities of the human situation in Life and History are analyzed, and it is in answer to the quests implied in these analyses that a Christian solution is proposed with an explanation of the concepts of the Spirit and the Kingdom of God. This method presents the same attraction as before: it enjoys the immense advantage of relating Christian faith and Christian symbols to human questions and to the common experience of man. Thus theology is made relevant; faith is grounded in experience; the Christian formulas shine as already implied in the human situation with which they are contrasted and to which they correspond; theology is not a castle in the air and the theologian a man in the clouds: his interests are those of man as man, to whom he brings the realization that words of eternal life can be spoken in the very anguish of doubt, and that words of eternal forgiveness resound in the very misery of sin.

NONETHELESS, the correlations of Life and Spirit exhibits the same basic weakness as the correlations already developed by Tillich: Reason-Revelation, Being-God, Existence-the Christ. I would formulate it simply: the analysis of Life and its tragedy is much more convincing than the description of the healing power of the divine Spirit. While the tragedies of Life are experienced and can be documented with abundance, the healing power of Spirit looks like the romantic description of an unsubstantial hope. This is partly due to Tillich's habit of vaguely alluding to the scriptural and traditional ground of his interpretations without paying much attention to accuracy of documentation and to the requirements of exegesis or history. It is also due to a deeper imbalance of Tillich's thought, which is so dominated by the desire to correlate situation and message that one often wonders whether the question is guided by the answer to be given in faith and which is known before the question is asked, or on the contrary the answer is so regulated by the question that it loses some of the originality of the Christian Revelation.

That the originality of the Christian message concerning the Spirit has been lost in the imbroglio of careful and painful analyses of the ambiguities of Life is an inescapable conclusion as soon as we ask: Who is the Spirit? Curiously enough, this seems hardly a proper question in the proposed system. For the solution to the ambiguities of Life is not now the promise: "In those days, I will send my Spirit upon all flesh," (Joel, 3:1) the first fulfilment of which was affirmed by St. Paul:

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"The Spirit himself joins our spirit to witness that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:16). Tillich's solution is: "since the finite is potentially or essentially an element in the divine life," there is a "mutual immanence" of the divine Spirit and man's spirit. What matters is not so much the Spirit as the Spiritual Presence, that is, the Presence of the New Being in Christ. As Tillich has explained the Christ ontologically, as the manifestation of the essential "Godmanhood" of man in which man is united to God, his ultimate Ground, he now explains the Spirit in the same terms: the Spirit is not, except as in a manner of speaking, a divine Person distinct from the Father and the Son. Tillich's description is centered on a problematic passage of St. Paul ("The Lord is the Spirit"), thus explaining the clear by the obscure. The result reduces to a minimum the meaning of Trinitarian faith: "In the divine economy, the Spirit follows the Son, but in essence, the Son *is* the Spirit" (p. 148). Thus the Spirit is reduced to the Spiritual Presence, an expression which Tillich uses much more often than the substantive from which it derives. The Spirit is the Spiritual Presence of the Christ in us, as he is also the Spiritual Presence of God in the Christ. This is no doubt "a radical revision of the Trinitarian doctrine" (p. 292). It can serve meaningfully for a new approach to the doctrine of the Trinity only if such a doctrine is meant, as Tillich believes, "to express in embracing symbols the self-manifestation of the Divine Life to man" (p. 294). Actually, the traditional purpose of Trinitarian doctrine is not that; it is to express the process of Divine Life within itself. The very core of Tillich's pneumatology is therefore unacceptable from the point of view of the traditional Christian faith which, in this matter, is shared by the Orthodox Churches, by the Catholic Church and by the Protestant Reformation.

WE MAY wonder at this point why this is so. The question is not aimed at the personal orthodoxy of Paul Tillich's faith. We may leave this concern to him. And there are passages in his recent volume of sermons (*The Eternal Now,* 1963) where his faith appears better grounded than his system. The question concerns the Church as a whole. How is it possible that one of the major Christian thinkers of the day should formulate a doctrine on the Holy Spirit which is so at variance with the scriptural description and the traditional definition of the personality of the Spirit? Paul Tillich is after all one of the few who have written at length on the Spirit and even—perhaps—who have given much thought to Him. Here lies precisely the answer: both Catholic and Protestant theologies have neglected the Spirit, and piety has largely ignored Him. Only in Russian Orthodoxy has there been in our time a major work on the Holy Spirit (Serge Boulgakof: *Le Paraclet,* 1944), and only in Orthodox devotion is there today an important stress on the function of the Holy Spirit. Paul Tillich has the immense merit of vigorously reacting against the "unitarianism of the Second Person" which is widespread in Western Christianity. That his approach falls short of the requirements of Christian Tradition is partly the fault of all those who could have contributed to the development of a modern pneumatology, and who did not. The time is past when the origin of a mistake can be clearly pinpointed and its author anathematized. The errors of one today betray the guilt of all, especially when, like Paul Tillich, he is extremely sensitive to the contemporary streams of ideas. This point deserves to be emphasized. Protestant theologians, in America, have largely left the concern for the Spirit to Pentecostal movements, on the fringe of traditional Protestantism. Catholic theologians, for their part, are still few and far between, and they are perhaps too complacent to see the need for creative theological thought.

Yet this cannot totally excuse Paul Tillich from keeping the last volume of his *Systematic Theology* below adequate standards. I am not now referring to his central doctrine on the Spirit, but to secondary questions taken up in the course of the book. The ambiguities of Life and of History provide such a vast topic that Tillich surveys an enormous number of problems which cannot all be given proper treatment. Yet problems of major importance for our existence today are dealt with in a very disappointing way. The question of atomic war, for instance, occupies seven lines: "The Churches as representative of the Kingdom of God can and must condemn a war which has only the appearance of a war but is in reality universal suicide. One can never start an atomic war with the claim that it is a just war, because it cannot serve the unity which belongs to the Kingdom of God. But one must be ready to answer in kind, even with atomic weapons, if the other side uses them first. The threat itself could be deterrent." This is not serious. For can any war "serve the unity which belongs to the Kingdom of God?" How does "the threat" —a brink-of-war policy—"serve the unity which belongs to the Kingdom of God"? And how are the moral implications of universal suicide charged, if "the other side" uses atomic weapons first, and "we" reply by completing the suicide of mankind?

J. Heywood Thomas ends a recent article on Tillich (*Canadian Journal of Theology,* 1963) with these words: "I feel that the way of drastic criticism which I have followed is the real way of appreciating the greatness of this outstanding apologist." Paul Tillich has the charismatic ability to be challenging. For this reason he is always worth reading. For this reason too, the proper response to his thought should be constructively critical. Only the undiscerning can object to such a critique. Only the complacent can fail to find in him elements for reconstruction.

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Council Post-Mortem

I HAVE BEEN going over the final analyses of the second session of the Vatican Council carried in recent weeks by the diocesan press. A number of them struck a surprisingly pessimistic note about the progress made during this session—surprising not because no case can be made for pessimism but because such frank reporting used to be unheard of in the Catholic press, and not so long ago either. Striving after-the-fact to balance such reports with my own impressions, the article I found most interesting was a Religious News Service dispatch by Father Edward Duff, S.J., who took a second look at the Council and called it good.

There was, first of all, the Constitution on the Liturgy. A few years ago this would have been beyond our wildest dreams. Even last year who would have predicted that we would soon have widespread use of English in the Mass and Sacraments? Taken in conjunction with the reforms already made, the changes voted this time by the Council Fathers will make lay participation in the sacred mysteries far fuller and far easier. As far as I am concerned, this is at the heart of the entire process of reform and renewal.

We also have cause to rejoice at much that was said during the discussion on the Church. It is plain that the Counter Reformation's extreme emphasis on the hierarchical structure of the Church is on the way out. No one questions the special place of the Bishops, but our emphasis now *is* on the Church as a Christian community, on the people of God among whom there are different callings but all of whom have a Christian vocation. This shift in attitude is of inestimable importance.

Then too there was the majority vote by the Fathers to consider the place of the Blessed Virgin Mary within the schema on the Church rather than separately. Some newsmen treated this move as a Catholic effort to appeal to the Orthodox and to Protestants. This reading was quite misleading. No doubt Protestants and Orthodox welcomed the move, but the Fathers were simply determined to place Mary in her proper theological place, as the Mother of the Church, and in her correct relationship to Christ. This move should have the salutary effect of curbing excessive and distorted Marian devotions which must be as displeasing to her as they clearly were to the majority of the Council Fathers.

Furthermore, there were the significant efforts to come to grips with the nature of collegiality. No doubt those theologians are right who say that much work remains to be done on this topic. Yet the discussion of the matter at St. Peter's has already done two things: it has helped put the question of papal infallibility in a better context than it has had since Vatican I ended so abruptly; secondly, it has helped to reawaken all of us to the fact that the responsibility of our bishops is catholic, not simply diocesan.

Finally, there is the question of our relationship with others. From now on, as Father Duff put it, "other Christian groups will be taken seriously. They will be recognized not merely as having dedicated individual members faithful to God and loyal to their fellowmen but as themselves, by their preaching and worship, the source of this dedication and service by their members." And as for the Jews, "hopefully, relations . . . will take on a religious coloration, if the solidarity of Jews and Christians in a single salvation history is, as the Council project insists, seriously inculcated in Catholic preaching and catechetics."

All these, taken together with Pope Paul's historic pilgrimage to the Holy Land, provide considerable room for optimism. But there are, of course, arguments on the other side of the picture.

There is, most of all, the nagging worry about the way in which the machinery of the Council seems to operate. Issues are talked about and talked about, but in this session, at least, few really definitive conclusions resulted. One does not want to accept the oversimplified newspaper picture of bad guys vs. good guys, with the Curia men and their supporters all black and everyone else beyond reproach. Nonetheless, while granting good will to all concerned, the fact does remain that in the end the majority of the Fathers seemed unable to do what they clearly desired. If those who control the machinery of the Council were not dragging their feet, it is hard to explain this fact.

Specifically, there were, for example, the chapters on religious liberty and on our relationship with the Jews. As for the first, the Church has suffered too long from the charge that she favors religious liberty only when Catholics are in the minority; we need an unequivocal statement on this point, based on the nature of the act of faith. Despite what seemed the clear sentiment of most of the Fathers, we did not get it. Similarly, we need a firm statement on what should be the Christian's attitude toward the Jews; the history of anti-Semitism in the Christian world makes this imperative. We did not get it. Instead we got a statement on communication about which, to understate the case, it is hard to work up much enthusiasm.

These, then, are some of the pro's and con's. It is not easy to decide what weight to give each factor. On balance, it is my conviction that the general wave of renewal and reform of which the Council is an outstanding example can be slowed but not stopped. I am, in short, nervously confident. JAMES O'GARA

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One Man's Fancy

Invisible (White) Man

WILFRID SHEED

RECENTLY, Robert Brustein, writing in the *New Republic,* suggested that the new English playwrights are just now catching up with the American class drama of the thirties. He was talking about *Chips with Everything*, a play that is certainly hung up on class, but it seemed to me that he was seriously misreading both the play and the movement: and I found myself wondering what Americans, who have never encountered a full-blown class system, can suppose they are seeing when they see these English plays.

For, as Vance Packard had demonstrated (no doubt unconsciously), the American class system is laughable when compared with the real thing. Class over here—to borrow what Harold Ross allegedly said about sex—is an incident. "The very rich are not like you and me": it is true that here as elsewhere money changes people with extraordinary speed. But a real, totalitarian class system takes much more than a few isolated coarsenings. It takes a whole audacious mythology bred into the national bones; it takes an impenetrable network of clichés ("would you want your daughter to marry one," "they're lazy, you know") that can be recited under ether or in delirium. Or even when perfectly sober.

The English class plays would possibly make more sense over here if they were acted out by Negroes and white people. Years ago G. K. Chesterton wrote a short story called "The Invisible Man," which was all about an English mailman whom nobody ever "saw." Ralph Ellison has, of course, used the same title in dealing with the American Negro. Victorian affluence required invisible people just as much as Galbraithian affluence does—human shock-absorbers for the economic bumps: and because invisible people have to be readily identifiable as such (identifiable, so to speak, on non-sight), and because English people lack sharp distinctions of formation or coloration, a fantastically complex identification-code has been worked out over the years, to turn mailmen into quasi-Negroes.

Nancy Mitford's humorous book on U and non-U described some of the ways in which invisible Englishmen are branded. A series of totally arbitrary and disconnected rules have been established which they cannot possibly know about, so that every time they open their mouths they are bound to make ludicrous mistakes. It serves an obvious double purpose to have your invisible people as funny as possible: and it is child's play (literally, for it begins there) to establish mysterious conventions by which they cannot help being funny. This tradition goes back a long way of course. Terence had comic slaves in his plays, and now that those particular conventions have disappeared, you couldn't ask for a less amusing bunch. It is this *kind* of thing that Arnold Wesker's play is all about.

Undoubtedly, hundreds of people cross the English class line every year, and become the equivalent of Negroes who pass for white. But the terror of discovery must be considerable. One breach of those facetious rules, and out of sight you go. *Chips with Everything* actually shows the reverse side of the coin: that of a man who attempts to go down a class, to merge with the invisible, and whose tail-markings remain triumphantly unmistakable. It is an important theme, because the facetious curtain works both ways, and is resistant to good will from either side. Perhaps Wesker's comparative failure to bring the theme off is a kind of backhanded witness to this resistance.

The obvious objection to his play (which, by the way, is all about life on an R.A.F. training base) is that his upper-class characters are satirized while his lower-class characters are more or less real. The officers may indeed present this grotesque appearance to the enlisted men, so that the portrait may be subjectively accurate; but a play can only remain subjective so long as nothing happens. Once the action starts, no play can long survive half-satire, and half-naturalist: and you haven't seen third-act trouble until you've seen *Chips with Everything*.

IT IS, of course, useful to know what the people on top look like from below, and Wesker is probably as accurate about this in his way as James Baldwin is in his. The officer believes that he is a master-psychologist who "knows the man;" from underneath, he looks like a clown or a sadist. The mask that looks so ingenious to the wearer is nothing but chalk and cheap rouge from another angle.

It is not, in itself, an argument against *Chips* that the genuine aristocrat will reject absolutely this portrait of

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himself. For it is not a picture of him at all, but of the men who do his work for him. The implausible bullies that Wesker writes about are as far beneath him as they are above the enlisted men. (Bull Connor would be about the same distance from an aristocratic Southerner.) The bullies may protect him, run his armed forces, keep the Negro in his place, and form a cordon around Southern hospitality, and around Bertie Wooster's insouciance: but the cream of the joke is that the aristocrat doesn't even recognize them. They are even more invisible than the people they keep in line.

Wesker blends the flunkies and their absent-minded masters into a single monolithic rat, which may not be too far from the truth of military life. But he makes the mistake of introducing a non-militarized, non-brutalized aristocrat, for contrast—one waking man in a room full of sleep-walkers—and here his bitterness dims both his eyesight and his intelligence.

For Wesker seems to be a sleep-walker himself, in the world of class. His "aware" aristocrat is the only character in the play even theoretically capable of movement—but he is the most stubbornly mythical man on the stage. His awareness (both self- and social-) is strictly pre-1914. Wesker either could not, or would not, give us a protagonist worthy of the situation: he wouldn't pay even that small compliment to the enemy.

The result is a fatalism again comparable to Baldwin's, but less fairly arrived at. The Wesker-man yields to the mating-calls of his own class, and certainly for all the good he was doing, it was probably his best move. But surely an educated U-character with a leftish bias is in a position to equip himself better than this; in the last scenes, the hero is cut down by some of the most lamentable sophistries ever heard from a stage. If we had known his resources were as meager as that, we wouldn't have given him our attention in the first place.

We know from Baldwin that the white man is already so corrupted that he can't do anything good even if he wants to. Now Wesker tells the upper classes that they might as well give up too: in a rancid version of their own myths, he tells them that, however good their intentions may be, breeding will tell in the end.

This is not a ridiculous position. An American may lose patience with it, because he hasn't undergone this particular form of hypnosis himself; he can't see why these people don't just get a grip on themselves and do what needs doing. (Now the race problem—that's a real problem).

But Wesker is not Odets, and the English class system is not just an incident. In America it does seem almost an accident that some people are richer than others. Labor leaders and management representatives are not conspicuously unlike in face or form.

But in England, class distinction remains as sharp as sex distinction, if not sharper. Its apparent dissolution since the war has, its best writers seem to agree, only revealed deeper layers of it, until writers like Wesker have been driven to this kind of exorcistic wail.

But the wail does not really exorcise. The aristocrat in the audience is untouched by it, because Wesker doesn't deign to touch him. The invisible man finds his darkest suspicions confirmed for the hundredth time, and learns nothing new in the process. The liberal continues to chastise himself on general principles, and to feel as guilty as can be about the whole thing. No important spells are broken for anyone.

THE SCREEN

Flow Gently Sweet Aston

ALTHOUGH Harold Pinter's stage play, "The Caretaker," loses many frightening aspects in its conversion into a movie ("The Guest"), the film is still something to see and be perplexed by. Since a movie must move, producer Michael Brikett, director Clive Donner, and Harold Pinter, himself, who wrote the screenplay, decided that the film could be taken out of the single attic room that was the stage set. This opening up adds to the realism and to the fresh air and bright daylight all of which detract from the spookiness. The movie, however, still has its frightening and frustrating atmosphere to fascinate an audience.

Its story is practically the same. The gentle, not-quite-bright brother, Aston, picks up a nervy tramp, Davies, who has sunk low in the social ladder but still has an overwhelming pride. Aston takes Davies to the attic room of the dilapidated old house which Aston owns with his brother and which Aston is always promising to fix up but never does. Mick, the cynical, mean brother, sees through Davies and his impositions, but is willing to play along with him if Davies can make Aston a touch happier. Davies imposes more and more, until he finally becomes a real pain in the neck, and even sweet Aston tells him to get the hell out.

Whether or not all this has any symbolism, I can't decide from either the movie or the play; but the whole thing is an absorbing, spooky, realistic fairy tale which, as far as I'm concerned is the "Theater of the Absurd" at its best. The acting is good, although a touch theatrical for a movie with the cast of three recreating their stage roles: Robert Shaw as the soft-spoken, nice Aston, Alan Bates as his devilish brother, and Donald Pleasance as the filthy tramp who thinks the world owes him a living. Whether or not you can make head or tails of "The Guest" (the change of title, no doubt, is to avoid confusion with last year's film "The Caretakers") you won't find it dull; and you may even be as spellbound as I was—even the second time around.

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HAROLD PINTER said as far as he is concerned "The Caretaker"—and I suppose he includes "The Guest"—"is funny up to a point. Beyond that point, it ceases to be funny, and it was because of that point that I wrote it." I'm not sure why the Swedish film "The Doll" was written or why a movie was made from it. The picture has little humor and even less of a point. It tells the story of a lonely and sensitive night watchman who lives in the attic of a rooming house and seems to spend most of his spare time staring at ceiling stains that look like Rorschach inkblots. He steals a store dummy to keep him company; he carries on conversations with her; and when he falls in love with her, she comes to life—in his imagination, I suppose, although then the doll is played by beautiful Gio Petré. Needless to say, all this leads to problems, especially when the neighbors wonder what's going on here and with whom the night watchman is sharing his room and bed. The man goes from bad to worse, and then discovers he cannot, as with most baleful habits, get rid of the doll.

Cinematically "The Doll" is quite handsome. Per Oscarsson gives an excellent performance in the sleepwalking, Hamlet-like lead role; and Arne Mattsson has skillfully handled his cast, including all those unpleasant, sinister neighbors. And the film is no doubt interesting for its portrait of a psychological degeneration. But the whole thing leaves the viewer in an uncomfortable frame of mind; he doesn't project himself into the story at all but feels he is prying into the affairs of a man who is more sick than sensational.

PERHAPS it is a film like "The Doll" that gives the hero of "To Bed . . . Or Not To Bed" the wrong idea about Sweden. Anyway, this man, an Italian fur buyer in Stockholm for an auction, has the crazy notion that Swedish women cannot resist Latin lovers. He is all set for a spree in Stockholm, but after a series of experiences with several blond beauties in that lovely, cold, wintry city, he discovers that Swedish women, for all their beauty, are not as gullible as he thought, and they can, when they want to, resist Latins very well. Produced by Dino De Laurentiis, and directed by Gian Luigi Polidoro, this ill-named Italian movie tries like everything to be risqué but winds up more like a travelogue than a fiction film. Albert Sordi, usually an amusing comedian, walks through the lead role in a stunned innocent-abroad manner. Neither he nor the thin story adds much or detracts from the stunning sights.

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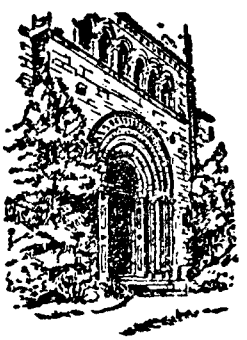

Prospective students should make early application

ALSO a little like a travelogue is the charming Russian film, "Dimka," which tells the story of a boy's search for a father. Delightfully played by five-year-old Alyosha Zagorsky, Dimka lives with his mother in Moscow. He resents the fact that he has no father and since his mother is a working woman, he is often lonely. But he's an imaginative youngster; and one day he sets out to scour the city to buy a father of his own.

Director Ilya Frez handles this slight tale well and is indeed fortunate in having little Alyosha for the title role. The boy is a natural before the cameras, and director Frez uses him well and displays Moscow to advantage too. The city is lively and handsome, and so is the young hero, Dimka, who is also amazingly resourceful for his age. I don't think the film always succeeds in its attempt to show us Dimka's world from Dimka's point of view; it has too much sophistication for that. But since few of us have traveled to Moscow, we should appreciate this excellent boy's view and man's view of another city.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

THE STAGE

Ready-Made Failure

ONE CERTAIN sign of our theater's pervasive lack of vitality is the way it is padded with objects that have been made from other objects, with dramas fashioned from novels or from short stories or memoirs, with musicals made from plays or from movies, or even, as in the case of the newly arrived "Hello Dolly," from plays that were originally fiction. But there is a more subtle way in which to be derivative, to shirk the really strenuous duties of the imagination through the appropriation of some object or substance lying at hand; and this is the biographical drama, or dramatized biography, which relies heavily on the pre-existing mystique or cachet of its subject in order to make itself go.

Terence Rattigan's "Ross," which was based on the life of T. E. Lawrence, and John Osborne's "Luther" are recent examples of the genre. Sidney Michaels' new play about Dylan Thomas is the latest and considerably the worst, being partly rescued from its own shapeless, flabby and unmotivated existence only by the presence, if not always the performance of Alec Guinness in the title role. Against the pull of Mr. Michaels' script,

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which wishes to present the late Welsh poet's life largely as a study in marital discord and the more obvious pressures of fame, and against the devastatingly cheap and vulgar staging of Peter Glenville, Sir Alec has communicated rather astonishingly something of the essence of the poet whom most of us would agree was the greatest lyrical voice of our time after Yeats.

"Dylan" actually covers only those last three years in Thomas' life during which he made his three trips to the United States, where he was lionized and became a legend for his boisterous behaviour, incredible capacity for liquor, runaway sexual proclivities and supremely exciting reading of poetry, his own and others. Thomas died in New York in 1953 at 39, in effect a suicide (he had been warned that to continue to drink would be fatal), while around his hospital room unfolded a scene of fantastic horror: admirers, hangers-on, drinking companions, would-be and actual mistresses jostling each other and jockeying for a position nearer both to the death-bed and the center of the myth that was about to be born.

The play entirely avoids this scene, which could have set the tone for something savage and shocking, just as, on the other hand, it almost entirely avoids Thomas' poetry, more of which might have given it the intellectual density and complex weight it so entirely lacks. Michaels, as anyone familiar with Thomas can see at a glance, has drawn almost exclusively on two books, *Dylan Thomas in America,* by John Malcolm Brinnin, the American poet who brought Thomas here, arranged his tour and suffered equivocally through the turmoil, and *Leftover Life to Kill,* the volume of bitter, passionate and defensive reminiscences by Thomas' widow, Caitlin. From the two sources he has extracted whole scenes and rearranged fragments of others to give what he supposes is an accurate account of his subject.

And it is accurate, in the way that a caricature is accurate, with only the skins revealed, the obvious gestures made, the stock figures moving in on the hero —a predatory matron who wishes to bring the hero to her bed, a noble matron who wishes to reform him. But what makes it all so much worse is Mr. Glenville's incredible musical-comedy staging: stars twinkling in the sky, a revolving set, mood-setting musical introductions, spotlights picking out the participants in a phone conversation, a steady horror of gimmicky, light-hearted, superficial physicality, furbelows in place of events and spume instead of surges.

Through all of this Mr. Guinness proceeds to give *his* conception of the poet and the tragedy, and manages to be affecting if not quite true to his original. In a brown curl wig and a turtleneck sweater, with something done to his nose to get that sudden bulbous upsweep of Thomas' and padding for the girth, he is brilliantly the physical evocation. But much beyond that, he conveys Thomas' innocence in the midst of guilt, his childishness, humor, wayward impulses, regrets, terrors and embattled stance between the responsibilities of art and the counter responsibilities of life, though he fails to get anything of the sheer physical vitality. It is, on balance, a minor triumph of the actor's art over the playwright's and the director's artiness, and if it doesn't make "Dylan" work, that is because the odds were entirely too heavy from the start.

(*At the Plymouth*)

(*Correction:* In my review of Harold Pinter's "The Lover" Michael Lipton was unfortunately listed as Michael Upton. This was the work of a printer who may or may not have had some nefarious purpose in doing it, but in any case apologies to Mr. Lipton, whose performance was in every sense worthy of his true name.) RICHARD GILMAN

CORRESPONDENCE

"Ecclesiastical Baroque"

Trappist, Ky.

TO THE EDITORS: In presuming to comment on the interesting and provocative points raised by James O'Gara in his recent column deploring *pontificalia* ["Ecclesiastical Baroque," Jan. 24], I have no intention of taking sides in what may turn out to be a lively tussle. It seems that the debate between "ancients" and "moderns" (which has been carried on as an academic exercise for many centuries now) needs at this point to be nudged in the direction of dialectic. And since we are in the midst of an all-round renewal, it is important that everyone, even a monk, should be somewhat articulate on the subject of liturgical and other reforms.

Here are a few tentative principles, which might help bring more clarity into the questions raised.

1) As the Constitution on Liturgy, promulgated by the Council, so often insists: the paramount question is that of *truth* in liturgical rite, symbolism, gesture, participation, and even decoration. Everything in liturgical worship must be true to the inner meaning of the mystery which is being enacted: the Paschal Mystery of Christ in His Church renewing the work of our salvation.

2) Since visible symbols and even ornaments are necessary in liturgical worship there can be no question of simply discarding all symbolic costume.

3) The problem is, then, to use a costume that is *relevant* and even in some sense inspiring to the faithful of our day, whether clergy or laity.

4) But this problem is not easy to solve because the general confusion, lack of education and lack of back-

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ground make it difficult to trust the judgment of the average clergyman or layman as to what is or is not relevant and appropriate in these matters. As a result, one fears that in the reforms and renovation that are now under way, there may be no end of hasty, ill-considered and sweeping changes in which a lot that is profoundly significant and alive will be discarded thoughtlessly, simply because those making the changes have no way of realizing that they are throwing out something of permanent and timeless value.

Obviously there is an equal danger that a superstitious reverence for the antique as such may lead to the preservation of forms and symbols that recall the less vital and less edifying chapters of the Church's past.

The symbolism of priestly and pontifical vestments should be of a kind to express in a noble and somewhat evident way the Royal and Priestly presence of Christ in His Mystery of Cult. Naturally, symbols of kingship will have a human reference of some sort. But the trappings of human courts, be they royal or ecclesiastical, are not the sort of thing that inspire spontaneous respect today. They are symbols of a secular society that once lived, but is now thoroughly dead. It would then seem logical to purify our liturgical symbolism of these traces of decadent secular court life and find new forms which will, while retaining the essentials of a pure tradition, speak to the men of our time in terms which they can apprehend.

In my opinion, *pontificalia* as we now have them are not only irrelevant and even distressing (should I say scandalous in some cases?) to many of the faithful of our time, but they seem to me to be quite inadequate to express what they are supposed to express. I know that I and a good number of the novices and other monks with whom I deal here, are all very embarrassed when we behold our prelates come out into the sanctuary dressed up as dowagers, in various frills and fripperies which have no power whatever to inspire us with respect for authority. Most Cistercian monks, who live a more thoroughgoing liturgical life than perhaps anyone else in the country, find it difficult to participate really sincerely and seriously in the more complex pontifical ceremonies such as pontifical Tierce preceded by a grand entrance with *cappa magna*, etc.

Yet this is not the case at all when we celebrate simpler liturgies more germane to our monastic state.

The problem then is not one of completely abolishing all vestments, decorations, ritual and so on, but of eliminating what is peripheral, excessive, meaningless, confusing and even absurd. When this is done, the real meaning of the essentially simple, noble and eloquent gestures and decorations in liturgical worship will be able to speak to the faithful as they are meant to.

But this involves a serious problem of education in taste, in awareness, in sensitivity to liturgical forms *in their truth*. I am afraid that this education is very much lacking even in those of us who should have it. Hence all who are engaged in reforming the liturgy at the present moment must be careful to remain open and attentive to a diversity of views and values. We must beware of our national impatience, which may well lead us to throw out ancient irrelevancies only to replace them with even greater irrelevancies of our own.

The stand I take is therefore not that of the *sans-culotte* but of the *sansjupe*. My battle cry is "Let's get rid of ecclesiastical lingerie and trinkets" and strive for honesty, sobriety and sense in the sanctuary so that we may deserve to wear pants when we are out of it.

THOMAS MERTON
Abbey of Gethsemani

BOOKS

The American Bishops at the First Vatican Council

The First Council of the Vatican: The American Experience. By James Hennesey, S.J. Herder and Herder. $6.50.

by John Ratté

THE publication of Father Hennesey's richly documented and crisply ordered history of the American bishops at the First Vatican Council should stimulate comparative study of the role of the U.S. episcopate at Vatican II. This remark is in no way meant to imply that *The First Council of the Vatican* is a piece of ephemera of the type so predictably generated by controversial events like Presidential elections and Church councils. This is a solid work of scholarship, not lacking in humor, written dispassionately, but not disinterestedly, *sub specie aeternitatis*.

Though it is focused by the nature of the evidence and the author's intent on the thoughts, attitudes, formal and informal writings, and actions of the forty-eight bishops and one abbot who went to Rome in 1869, the book is also valuable as a contribution to the general history of the Council. Father Hennesey makes it clear that there can be no accurate evaluation of the part played by any national group—or for that matter, of any individual—which does not stem from an understanding of the groupings of men and marshalling of arguments motivated by the overriding issues of papal primacy and infallibility.

The interests, as well as the characters, of the American bishops were as peculiar to the needs of their Church as the men seemed peculiar to their European brethren. French and German and Irish names could not disguise frontier manners and republican sentiments. In fact, the

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pastoral preoccupation of even the most theologically sophisticated of these men is a recurring theme of their correspondence, and a striking anticipation of what was to be the characteristic approach of more than the American fathers at Vatican II. And yet it is remarkable to see how even the most rustic of them came to an awareness of the force and complexity of the issues faced by the Council, and of the tense political (secular and ecclesiastical) milieu in which they found expression.

Father Hennesey eschews blacks and whites in painting his picture of the salon controversey, pamphlet battling, and formal debating over the issue of papal infallibility, striving to show in an American mirror of events how positions tenable and untenable graded from "left" to "right," from anti-infallibalist to inopportunist to infallibalist. This care, which stands in sharp contrast to the picture of episcopal divisions presented by the ill-informed contemporary press—also given exhaustive treatment here—is best studied in the delicate handling of the roles of men like Verot, Purcell, Kenrick, and Spalding, especially of the latter's attempts to create a "third force," and of the famous Kenrick pamphlet.

But what of the possible comparisons between the American delegations to the two councils—assuming that they could adhere to the canons of accuracy established by Fr. Hennesey? It seems to me that there are two major difficulties, in addition to the obvious and overriding fact that the historian simply lacks at this point both the wealth of documentation and the perspective for evaluation of Vatican II.

First, although the present Council can be considered in close relationship with Vatican I because of its great and growing interest in the collegiality of the bishops and the tendency to see this development in the theology of the episcopacy as a complement to and completion of the work of Vatican I, none the less the fact remains that no one topic of discussion and decision has formally obsessed Vatican II as infallibility did Vatican I. This is of course an accident of history: the guns of the French and of Victor Emmanuel, not the desires of the Pope or the fathers ended Vatican I, or rather, adjourned it. But even this may be a quibble, since it can be argued that it would have been psychologically and theologically difficult to take up other business after the definition.

Yet it is a fact that the greatest American contribution to Vatican I would have come on matters other than infallibility. For instance, there was the *schema* on the Church, which was never considered at the Council, but which was handed around for study. Here were elements which interested the Americans: Church-State relations, freedom of conscience, the very issues to which American bishops and theologians are making so great a contribution at Vatican II. Their predecessors in 1870 submitted recommendations and prepared speeches, but we can only speculate what force they might have had in formal debate on the schema.

The second difficulty is also suggested by this example. The ability of the Americans to have something new and fresh to say about Church-State relations depended on the very fact that the American ecclesiological experience *was* different from that of Europe: and this difference has been diminished as the character of the American problems has changed, and as the power and prestige and size of the American episcopacy have grown even as the role of the United States has grown. The Americans at Vatican I were drawn into debates and pulled towards positions set down by Europeans dealing with European problems like Gallicanism and ultramontanism in the European languages of doctrinaire liberalism and conservatism. A few men, like Kenrick, Verot, Amat, were able to make themselves heard in this "foreign" world of discourse; as a group, the Americans lacked the information, the numbers, in a sense, the interest, needed for them to make their mark. Only the history of Vatican II and its sessions yet to come will show us the "distinctively American contribution" which was never made to Vatican I. If it is made it appears that it will come in

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the very area in which the Americans at Vatican I were only allowed to speculate.

We are left with one question. What of the impact of the Councils on the Bishops? Father Hennesey thinks Vatican I was significant in this respect: "At the Council, the American bishops became aware of Europe's problems and Europe became aware of the American Church." If anything, the impact of Vatican II has been greater. Not in making the American bishops aware of Europe's problems, but of their own and those of the universal Church.

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Realms of Life

Santayana: The Later Years. By Daniel Cory. Braziller. $7.50.

by David Littlejohn

THERE IS something essentially wrong with this biography, and it is difficult at first to discern just what it is. The book is an account of the last twenty-five years in the life of George Santayana, the Spanish-American philosopher (poet, novelist, autobiographer, social critic, essayist) who cast such a glow over American thought and letters through the first quarter of this century. He is still moderately alive, in memoirs and paperback reprints, somewhat more than his old Harvard colleagues Palmer and Royce, somewhat less than their chairman William James. This "Portrait with Letters" by his disciple-companion is an attempt to celebrate, mildly, the centennial of his birth, and to rekindle a bit of that fading glow.

Santayana left Harvard, glad to be free, in 1912, and passed the second half of his life as a "Wandering Scholar" in Europe, as he had long dreamed of doing. Cory first met him in 1927, and his book, relying heavily on three hundred of the philosopher's own letters to him, quietly recounts the events of his uneventful life from then until his death in 1952.

These "later years" were given over, primarily, to the construction of Santayana's four *Realms of Being*, with elaborate interruptions for a novel, an autobiography (both Book-of-the-Month Club Selections, surely the only philosopher's so honored!) reviews, lectures, wanderings, and illness. There are pieces, here and there in Cory's book, of work-in-progress, both philosophy and fiction. But the philosophy, so noble and coherent in its finished form, seems here alien and unlovely: arguments over "terms" between professionals, bits and pieces that lose all their grandeur out of context. The stages in development, the critical justifications of Santayana's novel *The Last Puritan*, come nearer to being interesting, if only one could care enough about this wordy, semi-autobiographical *succés de scandale* of the 1930's.

There are the usual "I've been reading" notes—he spent years, in growing disenchantment, over Toynbee—and attempts to reconstruct "live" conversation: but Cory is no Boswell, and Santayana was no Johnson. For the rest, we have the account of everlasting wanderings about the antiseptic, Jamesian continent of the sedentary scholar. Regularly, Santayana and his fellow philosophers-in-exile Cory and Strong, uprooted themselves from one grand hotel and installed themselves in another, trying to escape boredom, to catch the sun. Florence to Geneva, Cortina to Paris, each city exactly like the last; Fiesole, Rapallo, the Bristol in Rome each October 15th.

Year after year, the same big decisions: to Switzerland now, or the south of France, or perhaps Venice; and always, once there, the same routine: "He would arise at seven in the morning, slip on a dressing gown and a pair of socks and slippers, and have breakfast in the sitting-room at precisely seven-thirty. This meal consisted of tea and toast and a soft-boiled egg. At eight o'clock he would go to his desk, wrap an old rug around his legs if the weather was cool, and write steadily until half past eleven. Then he would have his bath, shave, and dress for the day. . . ."

This paragraph, and the three that carry us up to Santayana's ten o'clock bedtime, are quoted on the back jacket of the book. Whether it will help to sell it I cannot say; but it certainly conveys with accuracy the quality and pace of much of this book.

One feels the last years of a spirit so rich and humane should have yielded more than this, however commonplace his daily routine. And if anyone is to blame, it is Mr. Cory. He is surely the most aggressively intrusive of contemporary biographers; he has wilfully and perversely made this as much his story—about which one could scarcely care less—as Santayana's: or rather, he has recorded Santavana's story only inas-

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much as it is a function of Cory's, a treatment that would shrink the stature and cheapen the value of far nobler men. That Santayana *chose* him as his official disciple, supported him for twenty-five years as a bizarre combination of student, secretary, companion, and literary executor does nothing to ennoble or grace his position here.

It is a matter of focus, of point of view: as seen by Cory, Santayana *was* a somewhat small and uninteresting fellow, for all the passionate praise. Seen only, or primarily as Cory's patron, forever sending him "presents" and doubling his unearned allowance, Santayana may well look foolish and petty. How, we ask, could such a man have needed (as he obviously did) such another?

I do not want to reward Cory's solipsism by exaggerating his importance: he has none, virtually, and it is doubtless the rankling awareness of this that leads him to build himself up on his master, the barnacle that topples the ship. Santayana saw this self-celebrating tendency, and warned him of it: all ingenuously, Cory quotes his admonitions. "You are preoccupied with yourself, and not always (in spite of many strong passages) lost in your subject. . . . The tone is too personal, and you bring yourself too *avantageusement* before the footlights." They could well serve as Santayana's comments on this book from beyond the grave.

For all his faults, however, perhaps Cory is not our only, or our major problem. With a determination and a success that few men have equalled, Santayana committed himself to a life of the mind; a rich and fertile life, yes, but one led almost entirely—at least in its latter stages—within the confines of his own memory, intellect, and imagination. Everything we know of him points to this: his bookish, reclusive childhood; his nostalgia over student years; his wholehearted delight at the prospect of a solitary and celibate scholar's career. He spent the last eleven years of his life at a Catholic nuns' nursing home in Rome, freed entirely from the physical concerns of everyday living, and reported "I was never happier than in their house."

Toward the idyll of the closing years, Santayana reminds one more and more of the hero of Beckett's *The Unnameable*, who eventually becomes "pure head:" he *wilfully* cuts himself off from other people, from the outside world (it must be remembered that he was near eighty). "I am at heart more indifferent to people . . . I abhor all connection with important and distinguished people." He delights in his "old habit of living like a monk in a cell."

The point to be made here is that such a life makes *external* biography irrelevant. His "outer" life, the life of Cory's disappointing memoir-biography, was indeed narrow, depressingly colorless, even bitter: but it is not for his outer life that he merits acclaim, or attention. Not only Cory's but anyone's record of the external events of these years would seem trivial. What matters is the record of his *internal* life, the Life of the Mind he so purposefully led—in a word, his books, as rich and expansive as biography is narrow and dry.

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It is for this reason one is ultimately dissatisfied, feeling throughout this record the tension of "the biography that should have been" trying to force its way through this inimical form, this waste matter, this pathetically narrowing point of view. The "real life" is indeed rich and inspiring; but it is not and cannot be here.

History into Art

The Lost Shore. By Anna Langfus. Pantheon. $4.95.

by Michele Murray

WITHOUT entering into solemn consideration of the relationships between form and content in the novel, one can say that certain subjects in themselves make a claim on our attention prior to their fictional treatment, and that our response to a novel dealing with such a subject will depend to some extent on the latter's pre-existing impact. The war novel answers different expectations in an ex-combat soldier and in a civilian reader. A novel in which Negro characters behave independently of expected stereotypes quite obviously will meet with strikingly different patterns of response depending on the reader; our reaction to a novel such as *Our Lady of the Flowers* frequently will depend on our feelings about homosexuality rather than on our reading of the book.

These reactions need have nothing to do with the quality of the book; indeed, the intensity of our feelings about the subject matter may preclude our approaching the book as an object in itself, a literary creation. Even the author may forget the necessary distinction between the raw material and its realization, and attempt to substitute the force of the subject itself for the task of fictional re-creation.

A case in point is Anna Langfus' novel, *The Lost Shore,* a Prix Goncourt winner in its original French. The subject is one that has special claims upon our conscience and emotions: the afterlife of a concentration camp victim. The *act* of camp survival is in itself an experience of such

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significance that language can add little to it unless the language is capable of confronting and transcending the experience. Verbal equivalents of acts that contain in themselves certain prime human experiences can succeed only on the highest level. Anything less becomes rhetoric in the pejorative sense, vulgarizing the experience it intends to celebrate.

Miss Langfus is a camp survivor; since this information is on the book jacket, we must be meant to take her own history—which is, after all, an inescapable testimony of experience—as an ingredient in what is a novel, not an autobiography. The demand thus made upon our good will, our humanitarian sentiments, is naked indeed.

Regrettably, on the evidence of this book, Miss Langfus is not a good novelist. However resonant her own experiences, she has been unable to convey the soundings to us in the guise of fiction. She depends on a fragile, poetic technique which is inadequate to its subject; what we have is a carbon of the spare, lyrical French novel of analysis, a mingling of Colette, Gide, Mauriac and Sagan, applied to a *donnée* almost entirely outside the range of the technique.

Maria, the heroine, is a survivor of the camps now living in Paris. From the first page she is devoid of all feeling but hate for those who do not display the marks of suffering. The presumption of the book is that nothing is important save the emotions of the girl, that she has earned without question her right to anguish, self-pity and rudeness because of her past. Those who try to help her are shown as cold monsters who have been able to forget what should not be forgotten; even fellow victims who try to live again meet with her scorn and hatred.

The tone is set at once: "Shortly before I reached the fourth landing, I stopped and stood aside for a woman. . . . She was slim and dressed in black; her face was smooth and pale as a pebble. She had the easy assured gait of someone who knew where she was going and how to get there . . . as she went by I suddenly felt like saying: 'How death becomes you, Madame.'"

Here and elsewhere Maria's reaction is out of proportion to the depicted stimulus. But we are hectored into collusion with her, into believing that everyone who is not awash in visible agony is callous, false, unworthy of sympathy. We are asked to accept that, in the face of massive suffering, any attempt to salvage even fragments from the ruins is to be deplored; the only honest response is to march forward to further destruction. Such insistent simplicity leads to melodrama.

This emotional pot boils in the midst of a plot heavy with echoes from a thousand other books, a plot with no necessary connection to Maria's indicated past but which could be the story of any neurotic young girl. We are being asked to comprehend the girl on the basis of what we know about concentration camps, not on the evidence offered in *The Last Shore.*

REVIEWERS

John Ratté is a member of the history department at Amherst College.

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